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Agenda item 125

FINANCING OF THE UNITED NATIONS MISSION FOR THE REFERENDUM IN WESTERN SAHARA

Report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions

1. The Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions has considered the reports of the Secretary-General, A/52/730 of 16 December 1997 and A/52/730/Add.2 of 20 February 1998, which contain the revised estimates for the period from 1 July 1997 to 30 June 1998. The first report (A/52/730) was submitted in response to Security Council resolution 1133 (1997) of 20 October 1997, which increased the size of the United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara (MINURSO) in order to proceed with the identification tasks. The second report (A/52/730/Add.2) follows Security Council resolution 1148 (1998) of 26 January 1998, which approved the deployment of the engineering unit required for demining activities and of the additional staff required to support the deployment of military personnel. During its consideration of the reports, the Advisory Committee met with representatives of the Secretary-General, who provided additional information.

2. During its hearings, the Committee sought additional information regarding the current cash situation of the Mission. In this connection, the Advisory Committee was informed that the Mission, currently in a deficit situation, had been forced to borrow $6 million in order to allow its operation. Moreover, the Committee notes that no reimbursement for troop costs has been made after the period ending 30 June 1996 and that an amount of $452,300 is estimated due for the period from 1 July 1996 through 31 January 1998, as indicated in paragraph 18 of the second report.

3. The financial background of the Mission since the adoption by the General Assembly of its resolution 51/2 B of 13 June 1997 is presented in paragraphs 2 and 3 of the Secretary-General's second report. The letters of the Advisory Committee referred to therein are annexed below (annexes I and II). As indicated in paragraph 20 and annex I to the second report, the revised budget for MINURSO for the period from 1 July 1997 to 30 June 1998 is estimated at

$47,402,100 gross ($44,419,700 net). This represents an increase of 56.8 per cent, or $17,172,300 in gross terms, over the resources approved for the same period by the General Assembly in its resolution 51/2 B. Of this revised amount, $13,097,700 gross ($11,946,500 net) is related to the resumption of the identification process and $4,074,600 gross ($4,042,800 net) relates to the engineering and demining operations, as approved by the Security Council in its resolution 1148 (1998).

4. The Advisory Committee notes that the additional requirements for the identification process contained in the second report (A/52/730/Add.2) show a decrease of $4,751,400 in gross terms over those presented by the Secretary-General in his first report (A/52/730). This is due to the vacancy situation indicated in paragraph 21 of the latest report and to the higher percentage of staff on appointments of limited duration. The Committee sought further clarification in this regard and was informed that, for the period from 1 July 1997 to 31 January 1998, the average vacancy rate for international staff stood at 14.5 per cent and that of local staff at 13.7 per cent, as a result of the staggered establishment and operation of the identification centres and delays in the implementation of identification activities. The Committee was also informed that, as at 31 January 1998, of the 268 authorized international staff, 202 were on board and that of the 95 authorized local staff, 72 were on board. Upon inquiry, regarding the breakdown of international staff by contractual status, the Committee was informed that of the 239 international staff on board as at 26 February 1998, 155 were under regular contracts (100 series) and 84 were under appointments of limited duration (300 series).

5. The Committee further notes that the revised staffing requirements for the period ending 30 June 1998 provide for a total civilian component of 390 personnel, including 285 international and 105 local staff - an increase of 183 international and 40 local staff. As indicated in paragraph 23 of the Secretary-General's second report, 176 international and 30 local staff are for the resumption of the identification process, while the request for 7 international and 10 local staff is related to the provision of support for the projected demining and engineering activities, as well as to meeting the logistical requirements of the Mission in preparation for the deployment of the formed military contingents. The details with regard to the latter are contained in paragraphs 9 to 11 of the second report. As indicated therein, those activities entail the construction of two base camps in the northern and southern sectors, the support of an additional medium-utility helicopter and the establishment of three mine information cells, one at headquarters and one in each sector.

6. The process of identification of applicants to vote in the referendum on self-determination in Western Sahara is being conducted in successive phases, with nine identification centres operating concurrently, each composed of two Identification Commission members, two registration officers and four General Service staff working in two teams. The centres are supported by Commission headquarters in Laayounne and three district offices established in the mission area. As at 19 February, eight identification teams were operating in the mission area (three in Western Sahara, two in the Tindouf area, two in southern Morocco and one in Mauritania), as indicated in the Secretary-General's letter to the Security Council of 19 February 1998 (S/1998/142). Moreover, it is

further indicated therein that between the resumption of the process, on 3 December 1997, and 18 February 1998, 42,484 persons had been convoked by the Commission and 30,425 had come before it for interview and identification, bringing the number of identified persons to 90,537 since the start in 1994.

7. The Committee was also informed that, at the request of the Government of Morocco, discussions are currently under way to open two additional centres in northern Morocco in view of the large number of applicants from non-contested groups residing in that part of the country who remain to be convoked. This would bring the number of identification centres to 11 instead of 9.

8. The actions to be taken by the General Assembly at its resumed fifty-second session in connection with the financing of MINURSO are contained in paragraph 27 of the Secretary-General's report (A/52/730/Add.2). The Advisory Committee recommends that the Assembly appropriate the proposed additional amount of $17,172,300 gross, which includes the $9,300,500 gross already authorized by the Advisory Committee, for the period from 1 July 1997 to 30 June 1998. The Advisory Committee also recommends approval of the assessment of $11,077,300 gross for the period ending 20 April 1998, as well as that of $6,095,000 gross for the period from 21 April to 30 June 1998, in accordance with the monthly requirements indicated in annex III.B of the report, should the Security Council decide to extend the mandate of MINURSO beyond 20 April 1998.

9. The Advisory Committee draws the attention of the General Assembly to the fact that the financial performance report for the period from 1 July 1996 to 30 June 1997 of MINURSO (A/52/730/Add.1) shows an unencumbered balance of $2,570,300 gross ($2,163,200 net). In that connection, the Committee will submit its comments and observations to the Assembly in a consolidated report on the financial performance of peacekeeping operations and the cost estimates for the period from 1 July 1998 to 30 June 1999.

ANNEX I

Letter dated 17 November 1997 from the Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions addressed to the Secretary-General

The Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions has considered the Controller's letter of 4 November 1997 requesting the Committee's concurrence to enter into commitments in the amount of $3,300,500 gross ($3,071,600 net) for the period from 1 November to 31 December 1997 to provide for the immediate requirements of the United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara (MINURSO) to enable it to proceed with its identification tasks. The request is being made under the terms of General Assembly resolution 49/233 A of 23 December 1994 on the administrative and budgetary aspects of the financing of the United Nations peacekeeping operations.

As recalled in the Controller's letter, the Security Council, by its resolution 1133 (1997) of 20 October 1997, extended the mandate of the Mission for a period of six months, from 21 October 1997 to 20 April 1998, and requested the Secretary-General to begin the identification of eligible voters in accordance with the Settlement Plan and the agreements reached between the parties with the aim of completing the process by 31 May 1998.

As also recalled in the letter, the General Assembly, by its resolution 51/2 B of 13 June 1997, had appropriated $30,229,800 gross ($28,430,400 net) for the maintenance of MINURSO for the period from 1 July 1997 to 30 June 1998. However, the appropriation did not provide for identification activities, which had been suspended in May 1996.

The Advisory Committee notes that the resources now requested would provide for the estimated non-recurrent costs of $1,231,300 for the emplacement of civilian personnel and the purchase of vehicles that are required for the operation of the identification centres. The estimate would also provide for the deployment of additional civilian personnel, consisting of 81 civilian police observers, 85 international and 30 local staff and 8 observers from the Organization of African Unity, as well as essential logistical requirements during the period from 1 November to 31 December 1997.

Pending submission to the General Assembly of a detailed report containing the revised budget for MINURSO, including full justification for the requirements, the Advisory Committee concurs in your request to enter into commitments in the amount of $3,300,500 gross ($3,071,600 net) for the period from 1 November to 31 December 1997.

(Signed) C. S. M. MSELLE
Chairman

ANNEX II

Letter dated 19 December 1997 from the Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions addressed to the Secretary-General

The Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions has considered the Controller's letter of 15 December 1997 requesting the Committee's concurrence to enter into commitments in the amount of $6,932,700 gross ($6,274,800 net) for the period from 1 January to 31 March 1998 to provide additional financial resources for the identification process, pending the consideration by the General Assembly of the revised budget for the United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara (MINURSO). The request is being made under the terms of General Assembly resolution 49/233 A of 23 December 1994 on the administrative and budgetary aspects of the financing of United Nations peacekeeping operations.

As recalled by the Controller, the concurrence of the Advisory Committee was sought in a previous letter, dated 4 November 1997, to enter into commitments in the amount of $3,300,500 gross ($3,071,600 net) to provide for the essential and immediate requirements for the period from 1 November to 31 December 1997 in connection with the resumption of the identification process, including the deployment of 81 civilian police observers, 85 international and 30 local staff and 8 observers from the Organization of African Unity, as well as initial logistical requirements. The Advisory Committee concurred with this request in a letter conveyed on 17 November 1997.

The Advisory Committee notes that the commitment authority requested in the letter of 15 December 1997 includes non-recurrent costs of $320,000 for the purchase of communications and other equipment and that it provides for the deployment of an additional 91 international staff and essential logistical requirements in addition to the continuation of the staffing component mentioned in the preceding paragraph.

The Advisory Committee is of the opinion that the requirements submitted have been overestimated at present in anticipation of a decision by the Security Council. In view of an impending action by that body, in response to the Secretary-General's letter of 12 December 1997 (S/1997/974), and the possibility of revised requirements at the beginning of 1998, the Committee concurs with your request to enter into commitments, but at a level of $6 million gross, for the period from 1 January to 31 March 1998, pending submission to the General Assembly of a complete report containing the detailed budget for MINURSO, including full justification of those requirements.

(Signed) C. S. M. MSELLE
Chairman

ANNEX III

Provisional expenditure for the period from 1 July 1987 to 30 June 1998[a]

(Thousands of United States dollars)

	Allotment[b] (1 July 1997-20 April 1998)	Expenditure (1 July 1997-31 January 1998)	Unencumbered balance
Military personnel costs	6 018.4	4 158.3	1 860.1
Civilian personnel costs	15 203.4	6 216.0	8 987.4
Premises/accommodation	1 299.0	123.8	1 175.2
Infrastructure repairs	-	-	-
Transport operations	1 776.0	417.7	1 358.3
Air operations	4 860.7	3 198.0	1 662.7
Naval operations	-	-	-
Communications	415.3	405.7	9.6
Other equipment	469.4	182.3	287.1
Supplies and services	406.6	308.0	98.6
Election-related supplies and services	-	-	-
Public information programmes	-	-	-
Training programmes	-	-	-
Mine-clearing programmes	-	-	-
Assistance for disarmament and demobilization	-	-	-
Air and surface freight	27.6	27.6	-
United Nations Logistics Base, Brindisi	-	-	-
Support account for peacekeeping operations	903.8	903.8	-
Staff assessment	2 271.9	551.8	1 720.1
Total	33 652.1	16 493.0	17 159.1

[a] Appropriation of $30,229,800 gross.

[b] Includes commitment authority of $9.3 million gross provided for the period from 1 November 1997 to 31 March 1998.

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FINANCING OF THE UNITED NATIONS MISSION FOR THE REFERENDUM IN WESTERN SAHARA

Report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions

Corrigendum

Annex III

The title of annex III should read:

Provisional expenditure for the period from 1 July 1997 to 30 June 1998

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Financing of the United Nations Mission of Observers in Tajikistan

Report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions

1. The Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions has considered the report of the Secretary-General on the revised budgetary requirements for the United Nations Mission of Observers in Tajikistan (UNMOT) for the period from 1 July 1997 to 30 June 1998, contained in document A/52/772/Add.1. During its consideration of the report, the Committee met with representatives of the Secretary-General, who provided additional information.

2. By its resolution 968 (1994) of 16 December 1994, the Security Council established UNMOT for an initial period of six months. Its mandate has since then been extended by the Council in subsequent resolutions, the most recent being resolution 1138 (1997) of 14 November 1997, in which the Council extended the mandate of the Mission until 15 May 1998.

3. As indicated in paragraph 17 of the Secretary-General's report (A/52/772/Add.1), total resources made available to UNMOT for the period from its inception on 16 December 1994 to 30 June 1998 (should the Security Council extend the mandate of the Mission beyond 15 May 1998) amount to $29,120,537 gross; estimated expenditures for the same period total $24,248,337 gross ($22,966,837 net). As indicated in paragraph 18 of the same report, as at 31 December 1997, a total of $23,939,555 had been assessed on Member States in respect of UNMOT for the period from 16 December 1994 to 31 December 1997. Contributions received for the same period amounted to $21,323,548, resulting in a shortfall of $2,616,007. As indicated in paragraphs 19 and 20 of the same report, voluntary contributions to UNMOT totalled $70,537 in kind, while contributions to the trust fund established pursuant to paragraph 13 of Security Council resolution 968 (1994), totalled $54,224 in cash and $67,000 in the form of a letter of credit. The total amount of $121,224, inclusive of programme support cost, has been authorized for expenditure through the end of December 1997.

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Revised cost estimates for the period from 1 July 1997 to 30 June 1998

4. Paragraphs 1 to 4 of the Secretary-General's report reflect the Security Council's action, as well as the actions taken by the General Assembly for the financing of UNMOT. In his report under consideration (A/52/772/Add.1), the Secretary-General has submitted the revised budget for the maintenance of UNMOT for the period from 1 July 1997 to 30 June 1998 in the amount of $19,887,800 gross ($18.954,000 net). This estimate is based on an increased number of military observers from 44 to 120, international civilian personnel from 26 to 71, locally recruited staff from 40 to 140 and the addition of 2 civilian police. As indicated in paragraphs 10 and 11 of annex III.C to the Secretary-General's report (A/52/772/Add.1), the additional provision for 45 international staff and 100 locally recruited staff was made with the application of a vacancy factor of 10 per cent. However, on inquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that, at 13 February 1998, the actual vacancy rate was 58 per cent for international staff, 49 per cent for local staff and 50 per cent for military observers, based on the new proposed establishment. On inquiry, the Advisory Committee was also informed that provisional expenditure as at 31 January 1998 was $6,341,500 (see annex I to the present report).

5. With regard to costs for rental of premises, the Advisory Committee notes from paragraph 22 of the Secretary-General's report that, under the status-of-mission agreement between the United Nations and the Government of Tajikistan, UNMOT headquarters facilities at Dushanbe are provided free of charge by the host Government. On inquiry, the Committee was informed that the notional cost of these premises would be about $2,000 per month. The Committee was also informed that the Mission was sharing the space in the building with a government agency and, in spite of repeated requests, was not able to obtain additional space in the building. As indicated in paragraph 20 of annex III.C to the Secretary-General's report, the requirement for additional space had to be met by the rental of an annex to the headquarters at a cost of $3,000 per month.

6. The Advisory Committee notes from paragraphs 82 to 86 of annex III.C to the report of the Secretary-General that the estimate contains an amount of $2,747,400 for assistance for disarmament and demobilization/support of assembly areas, as well as for support of the Joint Security Unit. Of this total, an amount of $2,119,200 has been estimated for start-up costs for two months for assistance for disarmament and demobilization and support for assembly areas for approximately 6,000 combatants to be offset against any voluntary contributions that may become available. The Advisory Committee notes that the cost of assistance, disarmament and demobilization of approximately 6,000 combatants is likely to exceed what is provided for in the budget and the additional cost is to be met from voluntary contributions "that may become available".

7. The Advisory Committee inquired about the potential for voluntary contributions and was informed of the results of the pledging conference held in Vienna in November 1997 for the implementation of the inter-Tajik Agreement. The Advisory Committee also notes from paragraph 14 of the Secretary-General's report that a total amount of some $40 million was pledged, directly related to supporting implementation of the General Agreement, against an aggregate of some $65 million sought.

8. The total estimate of $2,747,400 also includes an amount of $628,200 which has been estimated for a six-month period for a Joint Security Unit of 240 soldiers comprising 120 from the Government of Tajikistan and 120 from the United Tajik Opposition. Since demobilization and disarmament activities had not started at the time of the Committee's review of the report (18 February 1998) the representatives of the Secretary-General were not able to inform the Committee regarding the start of the process nor of its end. As can

be seen from annex I to the present report, of the $2,527,700 apportioned for assistance for disarmament and demobilization, as at 31 January 1998, only an amount of $32,500 had been expended. In view of this, the Advisory Committee questioned the capacity of the Mission to spend the full amount estimated for this item of expenditure.

9. In response to questions raised by the Advisory Committee, the secretariat revised the estimates still further and reduced the requirement by $3.3 million, based on the delays in the expansion of the Mission (see annex II).

10. The Advisory Committee believes, however, that there is potential for further reduction in the estimates. For example, with regard to the deployment schedule for military personnel as indicated in annex III.C of the Secretary-General's report, by 15 February 1998, 27 military observers were scheduled to be deployed to the mission area and a further 15 observers by 15 March 1998. However, the Advisory Committee was informed that the schedule had been delayed and it appeared that the targets for deployment of military personnel would not be met. That being the case, and the fact that the estimates for the military observers do not provide for a delayed deployment factor, the Advisory Committee believes that there is a potential for reduction in the estimates (see para. 12 below). The Advisory Committee's experience in this area is that there is rarely a mission in which the deployment schedule is implemented exactly as planned.

11. In view of the delays in procurement for most of the additional goods and services budgeted for the period ending on 30 June 1998, over and above those previously requested, including those items requested for the period from 16 November 1997 to 31 March 1998, for which the Advisory Committee had given commitment authority in the amount of $9.4 million (see para. 4 of the Secretary-General's report), the Advisory Committee doubts whether all the resources requested will actually be required during the remaining months of the financial period up to 30 June 1998 (see para. 12 below). Furthermore, it would only be possible for procurement activity to start after General Assembly approval sometime in late March or April 1998.

12. In view of its observations and comments in the paragraphs above, the Advisory Committee believes that the total cost of maintaining UNMOT for the period from 1 July to 30 June 1998 should not exceed $15,000,000 gross. Accordingly, taking into account the amount of $8,275,700 gross ($7,721,300 net) already appropriated by the General Assembly, the Advisory Committee recommends that the General Assembly authorize appropriation and assessment on Member States of an amount of $6,724,300 gross for the period from 1 July 1997 to 30 June 1998.

13. The Advisory Committee draws the attention of the General Assembly to the fact that the financial performance report for the period from 1 July 1996 to 30 June 1997 of UNMOT (A/52/772) shows an unencumbered balance of $1,507,900 gross ($1,304,300 net). In this connection, the Committee will submit in due course its comments and observations to the General Assembly on the financial performance of peacekeeping operations and the cost estimates for the period from 1 July 1998 to 31 June 1999.

Annex I

United Nations Mission of Observers in Tajikistan

Provisional expenditures for the period from 1 July 1997 to 30 June 1998 as at 31 January 1998

(*In thousands of United States dollars*)

	Apportioned	*Estimated expenditures*	*Unencumbered balance*
1. Military personnel costs	2 161.8	813.3	1 348.5
2. Civilian personnel costs	5 141.3	1 890.2	3 251.1
3. Premises/accommodation	161.5	63.0	98.5
4. Infrastructure repairs	0.0	0.0	0.0
5. Transport operations	2 452.6	1 554.0	898.6
6. Air operations	1 700.3	1 059.1	641.2
7. Naval operations	0.0	0.0	0.0
8. Communications	888.5	300.1	588.4
9. Other equipment	391.1	256.9	134.2
10. Supplies and services	181.5	98.0	83.5
11. Election-related supplies and services	0.0	0.0	0.0
12. Public information programmes	69.7	2.9	66.8
13. Training programmes	0.0	0.0	0.0
14. Mine-clearing programmes	0.0	0.0	0.0
15. Assistance for disarmament and demobilization	2 527.7	32.5	2 495.2
16. Air and surface freight	4.0	2.0	2.0
17. United Nations Logistics Base at Brindisi	0.0	0.0	0.0
18. Support account for peacekeeping operations	269.5	269.5	0.0
19. Staff assessment	744.5	57.6	686.9
Total, lines 1-19	**16 694.0**	**6 399.1**	**10 294.9**
20. Income from staff assessment	(744.5)	(57.6)	(686.9)
Net total	**15 949.5**	**6 341.5**	**9 608.0**
21. Voluntary contributions in kind	0.0	0.0	0.0
Total resources	**15 949.5**	**6 341.5**	**9 608.0**

Annex II

United Nations Mission of Observers in Tajikistan reduction due to the delay in the expansion

(*Thousands of United States dollars*)

	Proposed estimate (1)	*Revised estimate* (2)	*Difference* (3) (2)-(1)
2. Civilian personnel costs			
(a) Civilian police			
Mission subsistence allowance	28.1	14.1	(14.0)
Travel costs	6.4	6.4	0.0
Clothing and equipment allowance	0.2	0.1	(0.1)
Subtotal	**34.7**	**20.6**	**(14.1)**
(b) International and local staff			
International staff salaries	1 228.9	614.4	(614.5)
Local staff salaries	162.0	81.0	(81.0)
Consultants	32.0	32.0	0.0
Overtime	26.6	26.6	0.0
General temporary assistance	0.0	0.0	0.0
Common staff costs	629.4	314.7	(314.7)
Mission subsistence allowance	568.0	284.0	(284.0)
Other travel costs	18.9	18.9	0.0
Subtotal	**2 665.8**	**1 371.6**	**(1 294.2)**
Total, line 2	**2 700.5**	**1 392.2**	**(1 308.3)**
3. Premises/accommodations			
Rental of premises	45.0	24.2	(20.8)
Alterations and renovation of premises	57.0	53.0	(4.0)
Maintenance supplies	8.7	4.4	(4.3)
Maintenance services	9.1	3.7	(5.4)
Utilities	8.7	3.7	(5.0)
Total, line 3	**128.5**	**89.0**	**(39.5)**
5. Transport operations			
Purchase of vehicles	2 047.5	1 723.8	(323.7)
6. Air operations			
(a) Helicopter operations			
Aviation fuel and lubricants	171.3	57.1	(114.2)

	Proposed estimate (1)	Revised estimate (2)	Difference (3) (2)-(1)
(b) Fixed-wing aircraft			
Aviation fuel and lubricants	279.0	139.5	(139.5)
(c) Aircrew subsistence allowance	33.2	16.6	(16.6)
Total, line 6	**483.5**	**213.2**	**(270.3)**
8. Communications			
(a) Complementary communications			
Commercial communications	300.3	165.3	(135.0)
9. Other equipment			
Miscellaneous equipment	50.0	35.0	(15.0)
10. Supplies and services			
(a) Miscellaneous services			
Security services	4.8	2.8	(2.0)
Medical treatment and services	7.1	3.1	(4.0)
Miscellaneous other services	45.3	6.7	(38.6)
Subtotal	**57.2**	**12.6**	**(44.6)**
(b) Miscellaneous supplies			
Stationery and office supplies	9.3	4.7	(4.6)
Electrical supplies	10.2	9.0	(1.2)
Field defence stores	6.0	3.0	(3.0)
Subtotal	**25.5**	**16.7**	**(8.8)**
Total, line 10	**82.7**	**29.3**	**(53.4)**
15. Assistance for disarmament and demobilization/support of assembly areas and support for the Joint Security Unit			
(a) Rehabilitation/reintegration assistance to demobilized military forces			
Miscellaneous services	303.0	208.4	(94.6)
(b) Provision of food, including transportation and distributions			
Rations	2 444.4	1 557.0	(887.4)
Total, line 15	**2 747.4**	**1 765.4**	**(982.0)**
19. Staff assessment	379.4	189.7	(189.7)
Total, gross	**8 919.8**	**5 602.9**	**(3 316.9)**
20. Income from staff assessment	(379.4)	(189.7)	189.7
Total, net	**8 540.4**	**5 413.2**	**(3 127.2)**

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FINANCING OF THE UNITED NATIONS SUPPORT MISSION IN HAITI

Financing of the United Nations Support Mission in Haiti, the United Nations Transition Mission in Haiti and the United Nations Civilian Police Mission in Haiti

Report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions

The Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions wishes to draw the attention of the General Assembly to the letter of 3 March 1998 from the Chairman of the Committee to the Secretary-General, on the subject of financing the revised budget for United Nations peacekeeping operations in Haiti for the period from 1 July 1997 to 30 June 1998, as well as the proposed budget for the period from 1 July 1998 to 30 June 1999 (see annex).

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ANNEX

Letter dated 3 March 1998 from the Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions addressed to the Secretary-General

The Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions has considered an advance draft of your report of 19 February 1998 on the financing of the United Nations Support Mission in Haiti (UNSMIH), the United Nations Transition Mission in Haiti (UNTMIH) and the United Nations Civilian Police Mission in Haiti (MIPONUH), containing the revised budget in the amount of $34,334,400 gross ($32,963,900 net) for the peacekeeping operations in Haiti for the period from 1 July 1997 to 30 June 1998, as well as the proposed budget in the amount of $18,850,500 gross ($18,022,200 net) for the period from 1 July 1998 to 30 June 1999.

The Advisory Committee recalls that, in its letter of 17 November 1997, after having considered an advance copy of your report (A/52/512), it authorized you to enter into commitments up to the amount of $15,091,000 gross ($14,478,400 net) for the period from 1 July to 30 November 1997, against the resources appropriated by the General Assembly for UNSMIH, in resolution 51/15 B of 13 June 1997, to meet the cost of the peacekeeping operations in Haiti (UNSMIH and UNTMIH), pending a decision by the Security Council on the establishment of a follow-on mission in Haiti, as recommended in paragraph 40 of your report to the Security Council of 31 October 1997 (S/1997/832). Subsequently, in its letter of 18 December 1997, pending the submission of your revised budget report on the peacekeeping operations in Haiti, the Committee authorized you to enter into further commitments up to an amount of $9,237,300 gross ($8,805,800 net) for the maintenance of MIPONUH for the period from 1 December 1997 to 31 March 1998, in accordance with the provisions of section IV of General Assembly resolution 49/233 A of 23 December 1994.

The Advisory Committee notes from paragraph 20 and table 1 of your draft report of 19 February 1998 that the revised estimate for the period from 1 July 1997 to 30 June 1998 of $32,895,400 for the requirements of the peacekeeping operations in Haiti (including $561,000 for the support account but excluding $1,999,900 from a contribution in kind) represents an increase of $17,804,500 gross ($16,434,000 net) over the appropriation and assessment of $15,091,000 gross ($14,478,400 net) provided by the General Assembly for UNSMIH in its resolution 51/15 B. The Committee further notes from paragraph 22 of the draft report that, excluding the voluntary contribution in kind of $1,714,200, the budget estimate for MIPONUH amounts to $17,136,300 gross ($16,308,000 net) for the period from 1 July 1998 to 30 June 1999.

The Committee notes that, consequently, in paragraph 25 of the draft report, you have requested the appropriation and assessment of the amount of $34,940,800 gross ($33,353,600 net), comprising the appropriation and assessment of $17,804,500 gross ($17,046,600 net) for the period from 1 July 1997 to 30 June 1998 and $17,136,300 gross ($16,308,000 net) for the period from 1 July 1998 to 30 June 1999.

The Advisory Committee was not able to consider fully your draft report, as it was accompanied by numerous amendments and corrections provided on the day the Committee was taking up the estimates. The Committee was informed that the Secretariat had experienced serious staff shortages for the preparation of the documentation. As regards expenditures and commitments, accurate information was not available, as numerous financial transactions, in particular, payments of salaries which related to extrabudgetary accounts, had been charged to the assessed budget rather than to the corresponding trust fund accounts. These charges, in contravention of the existing procedures governing the management of trust funds, were made because the trust funds concerned had not received contributions from donors. The Committee was informed that, after finalizing the exercise of reversing charges, the Committee would be able to receive status of expenditures for the Mission. This, however, would not be available until at least three weeks from the date of the hearings.

Under the circumstances, the Advisory Committee concluded that there was no basis for it to report to the Fifth Committee on the subject at this time. The Committee requests that you prepare revised estimates for 1997-1998 and 1998-1999 based on accurate data. Your report should be simplified and all amendments and corrections should be incorporated into the new document.

Pending the finalization and submission of the revised budget document mentioned above and related action by the General Assembly, the Advisory Committee authorizes you to continue to utilize the resources already available to you, i.e. the $15,091,000 gross ($14,478,400 net) already appropriated and assessed by the General Assembly in resolution 51/15 B and the amount of $9,237,300 gross ($8,805,800 net) authorized by the Committee in its letter of 18 December 1997.

(Signed) C. S. M. MSELLE
Chairman